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Fifty-eighth session
Item 119 (c) of the provisional agenda*
Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives

Situation of human rights in Afghanistan

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to submit to the members of the General Assembly the following note regarding the report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan.

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1. Pursuant to its resolution 57/234, the General Assembly decided to keep the situation of human rights in Afghanistan under consideration at its fifty-eighth session, in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights and the Economic and Social Council.

2. In its resolution 2003/77 approved by the Economic and Social Council in its decision 2003/257, the Commission on Human Rights requested an independent expert to be appointed by the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, tasked with developing a programme of advisory services to ensure the full respect and protection of human rights and the promotion of the rule of law, and with seeking and receiving information about and reporting on the human rights situation in Afghanistan. This independent expert was in turn requested to provide a report on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and on the achievements of the technical assistance in the field of human rights to the General Assembly. By mid-August 2003, the independent expert had yet to be appointed, and consequently, he/she will likely limit him/herself to an oral presentation.

* A/58/150.

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Fifty-eighth session
Item 40 (b) of the provisional agenda*
New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support: causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Letter dated 25 August 2003 from the President of the Economic and Social Council addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I wish to bring to your attention recent developments in the work of the Economic and Social Council on African post-conflict countries.

As you know, the Council, in its resolution 2002/1 of 15 July 2003 decided on the principle of creating ad hoc advisory group(s) on those countries following General Assembly resolution 55/217 of 21 December 2000 on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. In paragraph 7 of resolution 55/217, the Assembly requested the Council to "consider the creation of an ad hoc advisory group on countries emerging from conflict with a view to assessing their humanitarian and economic needs and elaborating a long-term programme of support for implementation that begins with the integration of relief into development".

The creation by the Council of an Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau and its initial activities were brought to your attention in my letter to you dated 7 February 2003 (A/57/734). I am now pleased to refer to the letter addressed to me by Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations and Chairman of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group, and its attached supplementary report on the work carried out by the Group since January 2003 (E/2003/95). That document was submitted to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session for 2003. After considering it, the Council adopted a resolution on 24 July 2003 (see E/2003/L.23/Rev.1).

In addition, following a request formulated by the authorities of Burundi, on 21 July 2003 the Economic and Social Council adopted a resolution (see E/2003/L.24/Rev.1) by which it established an Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Burundi. The composition and the mandate of the Group have been defined in a Council decision (E/2003/L.48, as orally amended) adopted on 22 August 2003.

* A/58/150.

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The continued activities of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau, the mandate of which has been extended until the organizational session of the Council in January 2004, and the establishment of an Advisory Group on Burundi confirm the importance of this undertaking and of ensuring interaction between our two bodies.

I would be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Gert **Rosenthal**